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C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 005142

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [CO](#) [AUC](#)

SUBJECT: FATHER ECHEVERRI DISCUSSES PEACE PROCESSES

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary

1. (C) On May 26, poloffs met with Father Dario Echeverri (strictly protect), Secretary General of the National Conciliation Commission (CCN), which is authorized by the GOC to reach out to the illegal armed groups with the aim of starting peace talks. The CCN had met with the AUC negotiating team on May 17 and issued a communique expressing hope for the process's success and warning that a complete cease-fire and full dismantlement of the AUC were essential. Echeverri reported little progress with the FARC or ELN. On May 13, Echeverri sent a letter to FARC Secretariat member Raul Reyes proposing the church arrange a meeting between the FARC and the GOC so they could discuss the conditions needed for a humanitarian exchange. There has been no response. End summary.

AUC process

2. (U) On May 17, Father Echeverri led a CCN delegation in a meeting with the AUC negotiators in Santa Fe de Ralito, Cordoba Department. Following the meeting, the CCN issued a communique that:

-- Expressed hope for a successful peace process.

-- Warned that the process's legitimacy depended directly on the AUC's compliance with the cease-fire, respect for human rights, and adherence to the agreed-upon demobilization schedule. They noted that there was evidence the AUC had violated these three requirements.

-- Praised the OAS verification mission.

-- Emphasized that the full dismantlement of the AUC was essential to the process.

FARC and ELN: Little Progress

3. (C) Echeverri described his efforts to reach out to the FARC and ELN as being on a stationary bike -- he would continue pedaling, but was not moving forward. He showed poloffs a series of letters between him and FARC Secretariat member Raul Reyes. In the first, dated April 1, Echeverri urged Reyes to accept a meeting with the CCN to discuss a humanitarian exchange. In response, dated April 8, Reyes reiterated that the FARC would not agree to any kind of humanitarian exchange until the GOC gave the FARC a demilitarized zone in two municipalities in Cauca Department, brought extradited FARC commanders "Sonia" and "Simon Trinidad" back to Colombia, and released them and FARC international representative Rodrigo Granda. He also said security conditions would not allow for a meeting with the CCN. On May 13, Echeverri wrote to Reyes, that the CCN believed a meeting between the GOC and FARC to discuss the terms of humanitarian exchange was possible, and wanted to know the Secretariat's willingness to hold such a meeting. He also urged the FARC to release European Commission diplomat Carlos Ayala (see septel for more information on the FARC's role in the kidnapping). The FARC has not responded.

4. (C) Echeverri noted that he had held a meeting with the Ambassadors from the nine "group of friends" countries for a peace process with the FARC on May 25 to discuss their views of the possibility of peace talks with the FARC. He asserted that the international community could play a more productive role in the peace process with the illegal armed groups, but the GOC was hesitant to permit it.

WOOD